

**YALSA Board of Directors Meeting
ALA Annual Conference, Orlando
June 24 - 28, 2016**

Topic: Board Member Self-Assessment

Background: In 2012 and 2013, the Board approved the below *Board Member Self-Assessment* and *Board Member Learning Plan* in order to help new board members. The objective of Board self-assessment is to help Board members build a stronger understanding of their roles and responsibilities and to gain skills to increase their effectiveness as leaders in association governance. Often, the feedback received from first-year board members is that they are overwhelmed and don't know where to start. The self-assessment and learning plan were intended to give new board members a focus for improvement after assessing for areas of need. Sarah Hill has provided the information below for the board's consideration.

Action Required: Discussion

Overview:

The Self-Assessment fell out of use after two years, but all association organizations stress the importance of board self-assessments to develop plans of action for board development. There is still a need to prevent the "I didn't know what I was doing the first year" comment from board members. As Boardsource notes, "One of the most important things that a board can do to strengthen its own performance and that of its chief executive is to take the time to reflect on what's being done well and the potential challenges the organization may be facing."

Questions to Consider:

- Is the approved board member self-assessment appropriate and adequate?
- How do these documents work into the board mentor/mentee relationship?
- Should the same self-assessment be used for all board members every year? Or just new board members?
- Should there be another approved board self-assessment that is used annually to "help a board better understand and reflect on its performance, as well as to set a course for strengthened performance through focused board development?" (Boardsource)
- How skilled are YALSA board members at finding appropriate continuing education for themselves?
- How can board members be encouraged to take advantage of available (including Board Source) professional development opportunities?
- Should the results of Board Member Self Assessments be integrated into monthly board calls and board professional development?

Possible Next Steps

- Update the current board self-assessment and learning plan and begin using it again

- Determine frequency and timing of assessment
- Update mentoring/mentee procedures to involve self-assessment and learning plan

Financial Implications

- If the Board revises the current document, staff time to update links and resources.
- Funds to support board member continuing education activities will also be necessary.

Further Resources

- YALSA Board Member Professional Development document from August 2013
http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/BoardDevelopment_Aug13.pdf
- Board Member Assessment Process board document from the 2012 Annual Conference meeting
http://www.ala.org/yalsa/sites/ala.org.yalsa/files/content/workingwithyalsa/board/boarddoc/annual/docs2012/23_assessment.doc
- Board Source
<https://www.boardsource.org/eweb/dynamicpage.aspx?webcode=AssessmentsWhat>

YALSA Board Member Self-Assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to help individual board members create a tailored learning plan so they can strengthen key leadership and governance skills. In the first quarter of the board year, complete the assessment below, draw up your learning plan, and then implement it. During the remainder of your board year, work with your Executive Committee liaison to demonstrate what you’ve learned via activities such as leading a board discussion, creating learning activities or materials for other board members, etc.

The following lists of questions are organized into categories. Board members are asked to answer the questions honestly to best gauge their knowledge in a variety of areas in order to determine what they should focus on to become more knowledgeable over a 9-month period. After completing the checklist, review it and use it to prioritize one or two key learning areas to be your focus for the year (if you need help prioritizing, contact your Executive Committee Liaison). Then, complete your learning plan and submit the plan to your Executive Committee Liaison. The Self-Assessment is for you to keep and refer to as needed. It does not need to be submitted.

Mission & Purpose of YALSA	No	A Bit	Yes
I understand the mission of the association and can accurately recite or describe the mission.			

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I have a thorough knowledge of YALSA’s portfolio of book, media and member awards as well as book and media selected lists.			
I have a thorough knowledge of the association’s public-focused initiatives, including Teen Read Week™, Teen Tech Week™ and the WrestleMania Reading Challenge.			
I have a thorough knowledge of YALSA’s portfolio of continuing education offerings, including webinars, e-courses, licensed institutes, mentoring, preconferences and conference programming.			
I have a thorough knowledge of YALSA’s portfolio of publications, including blogs, periodicals, books, position papers, issue briefs, guidelines, competencies, curriculum kits, digital downloads and email newsletters.			
I have a thorough knowledge of YALSA’s advocacy efforts and what it does to support teen services and library workers who serve this population, including YALSA’s portfolio of advocacy resources, involvement in National Library Legislative Day, implementation of District Days and other activities as identified by the board.			
I have a thorough knowledge of the variety of member engagement opportunities that YALSA offers to members.			
I follow trends and important developments related to the areas on which the association focuses, such as legislative advocacy, engaging members through social media, delivering professional development to members, and so on.			
I understand the need for a national association, such as YALSA, to have a social media policy for Board members and understand how I need to support that policy by participating in social media as a way to help get the word out about YALSA and the work that it does.			
Totals			

If you answered No or A Bit for 3 or more of the topics listed:

Get started

Take 5 minutes to make sure you are familiar with:

- The YALSA Mission Statement
www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa

Learn More

Once you are familiar with the Mission Statement spend 30 minutes learning more about recent initiatives of YALSA. As you read, make a list of initiatives that you were not familiar with or that you would like to know more about.

- Read the annual reports of the YALSA President and Executive Director from the last

three years

www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/annualreports/annual_reports

Consider the YALSA mission and recent projects within the context of information recently provided via surveys. Spend 60 minutes reading and analyzing survey results, as you read the results note new ideas that are sparked by the results and/or questions that the results bring to mind.

- Results from the most recent strategic planning feedback
<http://tinyurl.com/3g2mvv5>
- Results from the most recent membership survey
<http://ow.ly/mPIBh>

If you answered no to specific items, learn what you can about them from YALSA's web site:

- Book and media awards and lists: www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists
- Member awards: <http://tinyurl.com/YALSAawards>
- Teen Read Week™: www.ala.org/teenread
- Teen Tech Week™: www.ala.org/teentechweek
- WrestleMania Reading Challenge: www.ala.org/wrestlemania
- Continuing Education: <http://tinyurl.com/YALSAlearning>, www.ala.org/yalitsymposium
- Publishing & Products: www.ala.org/yalsa/products%26publications
- Research: www.ala.org/yalsa/guidelines/research/research
- Advocacy: www.ala.org/yalsa/advocacy
- Member engagement: www.ala.org/yalsa/getinvolved/getinvolved
- YALSA Acronyms: http://wikis.ala.org/yalsagroups/index.php/YALSA_Acronyms
(username: Board, password: Board_wiki)

Keep Up

- taking about 15 minutes each week and reading the YALSAblog's section called "YALSA Info" <http://yalsa.ala.org/blog/category/yalsa-info/>
- read the monthly YALSA E-News when it is emailed to you on the 2nd Tues. of each month
- read the monthly reports from the President and Executive Director that are emailed to you

Apply What You Learned

After expanding your knowledge on this topic please contact your Executive Committee Liaison to discuss learning and next steps in the assessment and knowledge acquisition process. Before contacting him/her, consider which of the next steps you would like to focus on. Next steps might include:

- Proposal of a project to the Board that focuses on a topic covered in the Board assessment, or pursued as a result of the Board assessment, and which will help YALSA move forward in a particular area. If the proposal is approved by the Board, the Board member who initiated the proposal may be asked to spearhead implementation.
- Facilitation of an ALA Connect discussion or e-chat on a topic related to learnings.
- Pursuing further learning via the options recommended in the Professional Development Section of the Board Wiki.
- Compiling and sharing related resources with other Board members via the Board Wiki.

- Other: make your own suggestion of an activity that you think will help you and/or your Board colleagues better understand the topic.

The YALSA ALA Relationship	No	A Bit	Yes
I understand the structure of ALA and how YALSA fits into that structure.			
I know what the role of the ALA Executive Board is.			
I understand the role of ALA Council and how Divisions and Council interact.			
I understand the role of the Youth Council Caucus and how I can support the work of the group.			
I know how ALA Committees are appointed and the role Board members can play in the formation of those Committees.			
I understand how the ALA ballot is developed and how I can help in the formation of that ballot.			
Totals			

If you answered “No” or “A Bit” for 3 or more of the topics listed:

Get started

Take 5 minutes to read this overview of ALA’s organizational structure. As you read, write down one thing you didn’t know about ALA’s structure prior to reading the information:

- <http://tinyurl.com/6l2zhht>

Learn More

Then spend an hour or so gaining more understanding and getting more detail about ALA’s organization and how the Divisions like YALSA fit into it by reading these:

- <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance>
- ALA and YALSA Overview, <http://connect.ala.org/node/184024>
- This web page <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/financialdata/treasurerspage> features 5 different webcasts about various ALA organizational matters, including:
 - ALA Organizational Structure & Decision Making Process
 - ALA Operating Agreement

To learn a little about ALA Council and how it is relevant to the work of Divisions, watch this 15-minute video. As you watch, ask yourself, what is one thing I need to be paying attention to as a YALSA Board member when an issue comes to Council?

- <http://tinyurl.com/6ax5lgk>

Spend 10 minutes to get some quick facts about ALA’s legal framework, including information about its not-for-profit status and how that affects its tax status and ability to engage in political activity. As you read the information note any questions you have. Ask yourself, is there

information here that I don't quite understand?:

- ALA Legal Framework: 20 Questions & Answers
www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/legalguidelines

Then take an hour to get comprehensive information about ALA's governance, by looking through the ALA Policy Manual. Note especially section 6.4.1, which is the Operating Agreement between ALA and its Divisions. As you read, ask yourself, what does this information tell you about how YALSA and ALA work together? How does this impact YALSA's financial planning?

- ALA Policy Manual (especially Policy 6.4.1)
www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/policymanual
- Operating Agreement, <http://connect.ala.org/node/184024>

Keep Up

- Read the ALA President and Executive Director's columns in *American Libraries*,
<http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/>
- Attend Youth Council Caucus meetings at Annual and Midwinter

Apply What You Learned

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- Facilitation of an ALA Connect or e-chat discussion on a topic related to learnings.
- Pursuing further learning via the options recommended in the Professional Development Section of the Board Wiki.
- Compiling and sharing related resources with other Board members via the Board Wiki.
- Other: make your own suggestion of an activity that you think will help you and/or your Board colleagues better understand this topic.

YALSA's Fiscal Environment	No	A Bit	Yes
I am familiar with the ALA Budget and Review Committee (BARC) and the role they play.			
I read and understand YALSA's financial statements.			
I am aware of state and federal charitable solicitation laws that apply to our organization and am confident that we are in compliance with such laws.			
I know what the term 501c3 means and what its implications are for YALSA in terms of generating revenue, fundraising, etc.			

I know the basic purpose, responsibilities and function of a not-for-profit organization.			
I am familiar with YALSA’s Business Plan and the impact it has on the financial decisions YALSA’s Board makes.			
I know YALSA’s primary sources of revenue and primary areas of expenditures.			
I understand the role that partnerships and sponsorships play in YALSA’s financial picture.			
I understand what planned giving is and how it has a role in YALSA’s finances.			
I understand Board member roles in supporting planned giving.			
I understand how YALSA’s financial picture fits with that of ALA.			
Totals			

If you answered “No” or “A Bit” for 3 or more of the topics listed:

Get Started

Take 5 minutes to look at this Financial Primer. Note especially slides #31 & 32, which summarize the budget process and timeline and show you where the divisions fit into big ALA.

- ALA Financial Primer
<http://tinyurl.com/44sdkjm>

Learn More

Next, spend 30 minutes learning more about ALA’s financial structure and budgeting process by exploring these resources:

- <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/financialdata/finlearn>
- <http://www.ala.org/groups/mleader/budget>
- This web page <http://www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/financialdata/treasurerspage> features 5 different webcasts about various ALA financial matters, including:
 - ALA Organizational Structure & Decision Making Process
 - ALA Operating Agreement
 - Budget Cycle and Process
 - The Long Term Investment Fund - the Endowment

Next, spend 30 minutes reading through YALSA’s Business Plan. As you read, take note of areas you were unfamiliar with or would like to know more about: <http://bit.ly/MDY6kZ> (.pdf).

Then spend 20 minutes looking at this presentation on the Board’s Role in Fundraising. What’s one new idea that you have about how you can support the Board member roles in this area?

- <http://connect.ala.org/node/184024>

Keep Up

- Read fiscal reports posted on the ALA web site www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/financialdata/financialrpts/financialrpts
- Read annual reports from <http://www.mckinley-advisors.com/> and the regular blog posts from the Nonprofit Assistance Fund <http://www.nonprofitsassistancefund.org/blog/>
- The Chronicle of Philanthropy hosts free online discussions weekly at noon eastern at <http://philanthropy.com/live/> (transcripts from past discussions can also be found there).

Apply What You Learned

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- Other: make your own suggestion of an activity that you think will help you and/or your Board colleagues better understand this topic.

YALSA Governance	No	A Bit	Yes
I am familiar with the 12 Principles of Governance that Empower Effective Boards as outlined by BoardSource.			
I understand the role of the Executive Director of the association.			
I understand the roles of the YALSA staff members, and what each person’s area of specialty is.			
I understand the relationship between the Executive Director and the Board.			
I understand the role of the YALSA Executive Committee.			
I understand the relationship between the Executive Committee and the Board.			
I am familiar with the ways in which the Executive Committee works with ALA and other Divisions.			
I understand the Board member’s role in supporting the work of YALSA’s nominating committees.			

I know how meeting agendas are developed for Board and Executive Committee meetings and I actively take part in that development.			
I understand my role and responsibilities as a Board Liaison to appointed member groups.			
I understand the purpose of ad hoc Board subcommittees and my role as a member and/or leader of these.			
Totals			

If you answered No or A Bit for 3 or more of the topics listed:

Get Started

Start by spending 20 minutes learning more about what makes for successful association governance. As you read through the document listed below, consider the ways in which you see the YALSA Board successfully demonstrating the principles, the areas in which you have questions, and areas in which you think the YALSA Board might improve:

- The 12 Principles that Empower Exceptional Boards.
http://iufoundation.iu.edu/pdf/BoardSource_handout_12%20principles_of_governance.pdf
- Nonprofit Governance: the Last 20 Years
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_vsK5Fuwlw

Learn More

Once you have read through the principles of effective association governance spend 60 minutes reading through information on the YALSA Executive Committee and the duties of Board members. As you read, take note of the areas in which you think the work of these groups can help the association Board achieve the 12 principles:

- Board Duties
www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/yalsahandbook/boardduties
- YALSA Podcast: Board Member Roundtable
<http://tinyurl.com/3zqkjj5>
- Scope and Responsibility of the Executive Committee
www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/committees/exccommittee
- Executive Committee Duties
www.ala.org/yalsa/aboutyalsa/yalsahandbook/dutiesresponsibilities

Keep Up

- Read the YALSA President & Executive Director monthly reports that are emailed to you
- Access the sites, blogs, etc. in the Resources for Association Governance section of the Board Wiki,
http://wikis.ala.org/yalsagroups/index.php/Resources_for_Association_Governance
(username: Board, password: Board_Wiki)

Apply What You Learned

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- Other: make your own suggestion of an activity that you think will help you and/or your Board colleagues better understand this topic.

Board Leadership	Yes	A Bit	No
I know and demonstrate the skills, knowledge, and attributes required in order to be a successful leader in a national organization.			
I am well-versed in the association’s Strategic Plan and the role that Board members have in helping YALSA meet the goals of the plan.			
I understand the role that appointed member groups play in supporting the YALSA Strategic Plan and am able to articulate to group members and chairs what that role is.			
I am familiar with the Bylaws of the association and how they govern the work of members and the Board.			
I understand the role that social media plays in my work as a Board leader.			
I understand how to effectively communicate with members, using a variety of tools, in order to get the word out about the work of YALSA and how members can be involved in that work.			
I understand the role that I should take on as a leader in the organization with members.			
Totals			

If you answered No or A Bit for 3 or more of the topics listed:

Get Started

Start by taking 60 minutes and listening to the podcast titled *Leadership & Choice*. As you listen, consider the leadership skills that Carly Fiorina discusses as being important for leaders to

embrace. Take note of the skills that you believe you have, those that you think you would need to learn, and those that you think members of the Board should spend more time working on. (You can start at the 15:52 point in the recording. Also note that at 24:00 Fiorina starts a very specific discussion on management vs. leadership and of the three qualities of leadership.)

- <http://ecorner.stanford.edu/authorMaterialInfo.html?mid=1679>

Learn More

Spend 30 minutes reading two articles from *Harvard Business Review* on leadership. As you read, consider how the information in the articles represents how you see your role on the YALSA Board and how you demonstrate leadership on the Board. Answer the question, how can I be a better YALSA leader?

- What Makes a Leader, *Harvard Business Review*, January 2004, <http://hbr.org/2004/01/what-makes-a-leader/ar/1>
- What Makes a Good Leader, *Harvard Business School Bulletin*, February 2001, <http://www.alumni.hbs.edu/bulletin/2001/february/leader.html>

After listening to the podcast and reading the articles, take 30 minutes to read about and view the presentation by Beth Kanter titled *Creating Your Organization's Social Media Strategy Map*. As you spend time with this resource, consider how the strategies that Kanter mentions relate to the leadership skills you thought and heard about when listening to the Fiorina podcast. Answer the question, how does social media fit into your role as a YALSA leader?

- <http://tinyurl.com/bg5nr6>

Keep Up

- Listen to or watch a free podcast or webcast from the American Management Association <http://www.amanet.org/training/web-events.aspx?SelectedSolutionType=Web%20Events>

Apply What You Learned

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- Other: make your own suggestion of an activity that you think will help you and/or your Board colleagues better understand this topic.

For More Information

Visit the “Resources for Association Governance” and “Professional Development” sections of the Board Wiki http://wikis.ala.org/yalsagroups/index.php/Board_of_Directors (username: Board, password: Board_Wiki) and also try:

YALSA and ALA

- ALA Structure, Organization, Governance
<http://tinyurl.com/6l2zhht>
- ALA Constitution and Bylaws
www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/constitution
- ALA Executive Board Job Description,
http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/governance/officers/ebd_mem_job_descrip.pdf
- ALA President and Executive Director Job Description and Responsibilities,
<http://bit.ly/OrPuyn> (.pdf)
- ALA Council: Composition and Charge, www.ala.org/aboutala/governance/council
- Youth Council Caucus, <http://connect.ala.org/node/81259>
- Three most recent years’ worth of YALSA Fiscal Officer Reports, submitted as documents for Midwinter & Annual meetings,
www.ala.org/yalsa/workingwithyalsa/board/documents

Fundraising and the not-for-profit sector

- Nonprofit Assistance Fund: resources and training:
<http://www.nonprofitsassistancefund.org/>
- Chronicle of Philanthropy (incl. live discussions & webinars)
<http://philanthropy.com/section/Home/172/>
- Foundation Center: <http://foundationcenter.org/> (e-courses, videos and webinars)

YALSA Board Member Learning Plan

Please fill out this plan after you’ve completed the Self Assessment and share the plan with your Executive Committee Liaison (you don’t need to submit the Self Assessment). The purpose of this learning plan is to help you identify a way to demonstrate what you’ve learned and to plan on how to carry that out.

SAMPLE GOAL

Learning Goal(s)	Current Status	Learning Strategies	Required Resources	Key Performance Indicators
What skills & knowledge do I need?	What level of skills & knowledge do I have now with respect to this goal? <i>(refer to your self-assessment)</i>	How will I reach this learning goal?	What resources do I need to achieve this goal?	How can I demonstrate to myself & others that I have achieved this goal? <i>(refer to the self-assessment document for other ideas on how to</i>

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				<i>demonstrate what you learned)</i>
EXAMPLE: Understand the board role in planned giving	A bit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read about planned giving from the Giving section of YALSA’s web site and follow up with the Fiscal Officer and Executive Director if I any questions • As per the self-assessment sheet, read over the PowerPoint Presentation about planned giving • Check the Board Wiki to see what resources are there in regards to planned giving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access YALSA’s web site and Board wiki • PowerPoint presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I might find resources online about planned giving and nonprofits and add links to them to the Board Wiki • I could brainstorm ways that YALSA might enhance its planned giving efforts and present them as a board document for the full board to discuss • I could record a brief podcast about planned giving that other board members could listen to

My name:

MY GOAL

Learning Goal(s) What skills & knowledge do I need?	Current Status What level of skills & knowledge do I have now with respect to this goal? <i>(refer to your self-assessment)</i>	Learning Strategies How will I reach this learning goal?	Required Resources What resources do I need to achieve this goal?	Key Performance Indicators How can I demonstrate to myself & others that I have achieved this goal? <i>(refer to the self-assessment document for other ideas on how to demonstrate what you learned)</i>
My goal:				

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